

Friday 10/09/20

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Search Underway for Missing Aussie Surfer Bitten by Shark in Western Australia
by [Gaby Arancibia](#)

A massive search is underway in the state of Western Australia after officials were alerted Friday to the case of a missing surfer who had been severely bitten by a shark at a beach near the coastal town of Esperance.

The shark attack, which was witnessed by several beachgoers, occurred at the Kelp Beds beach in Wylie Bay just before 11 a.m. local time. Officials have not yet publicly identified the individual; however, [Western Australia Police Senior Sgt. Justin Tarasinski told reporters](#) that the missing surfer is a man who is "well-known" in the area.

"The family are aware," he said. "They are absolutely devastated."

According to Tarasinski, the attack was witnessed by approximately six to eight surfers in the water in addition to several bystanders on the beach. Although Tarasinski did not go into detail regarding the incident, [individuals who spoke with Aussie outlet 7 News](#) indicated that the attack "was so severe the man could not have survived."

Citing Mark McGowan, the premier of Western Australia, [the Guardian reported](#) that one surfer did attempt to pull the unidentified man away from the shark but was unsuccessful. "It's a very, very difficult and potentially tragic situation happening in Esperance," he was quoted as saying by the outlet.

At present, officials have only managed to retrieve the man's surfboard, which washed ashore not long after the attack and has been described as having "obvious signs of shark attack." Beaches from the Aussie state's Wylie Head to Cape Le Grand National Park have been shuttered for the time being.

A collaborative search effort by the local Esperance Police, St. John Ambulance Australia, Marine Rescue, Surf Life Saving WA and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is ongoing.

According to the Guardian, a total of six confirmed deaths from shark attacks have occurred in Australia in 2020, involving individuals aged between 15 and 60.

The attack comes just days after professional Australian surfer Matt Wilkinson had a close encounter with a great white shark near Sharpes Beach in New South Wales. At the time, Wilkinson was completely unaware of the nearby predator and was [only alerted to its presence by a drone](#) operated by local emergency officials.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Where Did That Come From?!': Sneaky Pup Hides Tortilla Chip Inside Mouth - Video Club

Raleigh, a golden retriever living it up in Chicago, Illinois, recently proved that some of the best hiding places really are the most obvious and can often be simple spots that one might not think of.

Cellphone video shared by Chicagoan Chalonda White on Facebook captures the silly golden being confronted over the soapy bubbles on his muzzle before it's revealed the "guilty" Raleigh was hiding a tortilla chip inside his mouth the entire time.

"Where did that come from?! Is that a tortilla chip?" White is heard saying as Raleigh spits out the chip. "He's hoarding food and bubbles."

This silly pup sure knows how to keep his mom on her toes.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

'Africa is Not a Country': Netizens Baffled by US State Department Statement on Elections by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

Folks on Twitter were extremely puzzled by a Thursday press statement by the US Department of State on the vague topic of "elections in Africa."

On Thursday, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo [issued a statement on "upcoming elections in Africa"](#) that many found confusing and some regarded as typical of Western ignorance of the continent.

"The United States is committed to supporting free and fair elections, including the upcoming elections across Africa. We will not hesitate to consider consequences – including visa restrictions – for those who undermine democracy," [Pompeo tweeted in a separate Thursday statement](#) that mirrored the news release's language.

However, some folks quickly picked up on the vague wording and lack of focus of Pompeo's statement.

Some of the elections coming up on the African continent in the next few months include Tanzania's general election on October 28, Cote D'Ivoire's presidential election on October 31, Burkina Faso's general election on November 22 and Ghana's general election on December 7. "One could roughly compare the distance between Cote D'Ivoire and Tanzania to the distance between Norway and Iraq," [Foreign Policy writer Robbie Gramer noted](#). However, other people were less diplomatic.

However to many, Pompeo's statement was not just ignorant but audacious, given the state of turmoil in the US political system, including the election processes intended to select the next president and set of lawmakers on November 3.

Before being appointed to his present position in March 2018, Pompeo was director of the Central Intelligence Agency for 15 months, [an agency that has worked hard over the last 75 years](#) to ensure that only pro-Western governments stay in power in African nations, even if they are highly undemocratic.

Just a few of the democratic leaders and movements the CIA has helped orchestrate the overthrows of include Patrice Lumumba, [the Congo's first democratically elected president who](#)

[was assassinated in 1961](#) in a coup orchestrated by the US, UK and Belgium, and Kwame Nkrumah, the first democratically elected president of Ghana, who was overthrown in 1966. The CIA also gave the administration of South African President Charles Swart [a tip that led to the arrest of Nelson Mandela in 1962](#), and it gave heavy support to the UNITA and FNLA parties after the pro-Soviet MPLA led Angola to independence from Portugal in 1974. [The spy agency also helped Hissene Habri come to power in Chad in 1982](#), overthrowing the Transitional Government of National Unity under Goukouni Oueddei that aimed to heal the wounds of a brutal civil war.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Listen: Trump Tells Iran Not to 'F**k Around With Us' on Conservative Radio Show
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

During an extensive radio interview with conservative host Rush Limbaugh on Friday, US President Donald Trump threatened Iran in explicit language.

On what was apparently a Friday morning free from official obligations, Trump phoned in to Limbaugh's talk radio show and spoke for nearly two hours about a wide range of topics, including his administration's ongoing confrontation with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"Iran knows that and they've been put on notice: if you f**k around with us, if you do something bad to us, we are gonna do things to you that have never been done before," Trump told Limbaugh.

Despite [ongoing debate about whether or not a "fleeting expletive,"](#) as the Federal Communications Commissions calls it, is protected speech under the First Amendment, Trump's comment rings similar to another threat he made against the Middle Eastern nation earlier this year.

On January 4, the day after Trump ordered the assassination of Iranian Quds Force commander Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani, [he issued a further threat against Tehran](#) that "if Iran strikes any Americans, or American assets, we have targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture, and those targets, and Iran itself, WILL BE HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

Trump came under wide attack for the comments, with many noting [the act of cultural destruction is a war crime](#) and [falls under the category of genocidal actions](#). Even his own pentagon chief, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper, blithely responded to the statement by noting that "we will follow the laws of armed conflict."

Earlier this year, [Trump gave Limbaugh the Presidential Medal of Freedom](#) at the State of the Union Address, calling [the controversial talk show host](#) "a special man beloved by millions of Americans" and "the greatest fighter that you will ever meet."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Pentagon Taps SpaceX to Build Cargo Transport Able to Ship Weapons Anywhere in One Hour
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

On Wednesday, the head of US Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) announced a new partnership with private space firms SpaceX and XArc to develop space-based cargo transport, something the Pentagon says has “the potential to be one of the greatest revolutions in transportation since the airplane.”

“Think about moving the equivalent of a C-17 payload anywhere on the globe in less than an hour,” [TRANSCOM chief US Army Gen. Stephen R. Lyons said](#) at a virtual Wednesday meeting at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.

“Think about that speed associated with the movement of transportation of cargo and people. There is a lot of potential here, and I'm really excited about the team that's working with SpaceX on an opportunity, even perhaps, as early as [2021], to be conducting a proof of principle,” Lyons said.

TRANSCOM deputy commander US Navy Vice Adm. Dee Mewbourne further noted, “For the past 75 years or so, we have been constrained to around 40,000 feet altitude and 600 miles per hour in our very fastest method of logistics delivery - airlift.”

[According to the Times of London](#), the roughly 7,600-mile trip from Florida to Afghanistan would take just an hour via space cargo rocket, but a C-17 Globemaster III transport aircraft would take 15 hours to fly the distance.

Under the new program, the Pentagon will support the efforts of commercial space-faring companies like SpaceX and XArc in their development of space-based cargo transportation with the intention of developing a “space transportation surge capability agreement” similar to the Civil Reserve Air Fleet emergency preparedness program.

What kind of transportation system the Pentagon envisions is unclear: while SpaceX has spent years developing reusable rocket technology [that includes landing a rocket on a seaborne platform](#), it's also possible these cargo trips could be one-way, launching up and then parachuting down over their destination.

The news comes just days after SpaceX received another contract from the Pentagon [to build four ballistic missile early warning satellites](#) for the US Space Force. That deal is worth \$149.1 million, and the satellites will be based on SpaceX's Starlink broadband network satellites.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

New Sanctions Will Further Washington's Goal of Blocking Iran's Importing of Medicine - Academic
by [Morgan Artyukhina](#)

On Thursday, the US State Department announced new economic sanctions targeting 18 Iranian banks, claiming it was further depriving Iran “of funds to carry out its support for terrorist

activities and nuclear extortion that threatens the world.” However, the real effect will be to deprive Iranians of essential medicines, an expert told Sputnik.

[The sanctions are just the latest attempt by Washington](#) to economically and politically isolate Tehran after US President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal. Like that decision, US allies in Europe have heavily criticized the new sanctions.

“It’s like a punch in the face to the Europeans, who have gone out of their way to indicate to the Americans that they view it as being extremely threatening to humanitarian assistance or humanitarian trade going to Iran,” Elizabeth Rosenberg of the Center for a New American Security think tank [told Reuters about the sanctions](#).

[An unnamed senior European official told the Washington Post](#) the governments of the UK, Germany and France feared that Iran’s foreign assets would be effectively frozen by the sanctions, “thus further exacerbating the shortage of foreign currency to pay for humanitarian imports.”

However, US Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin [has claimed the sanctions will not interfere with importing](#) medicine or food.

“There is no doubt that the treasury secretary is not telling the truth. The United States wants to prevent Iran from using any currency, not just the dollar, and any part of the financial system,” Seyed Mohammad Marandi, professor of English literature and Orientalism at the University of Tehran, told [Radio Sputnik’s By Any Means Necessary](#) on Friday.

Marandi told hosts Sean Blackmon and Jacquie Luqman the US was blocking humanitarian goods from entering the country, including medicine, agricultural products and the machinery and materials to produce them.

“All of them are being blocked by the United States intentionally. The objective is to create a catastrophic situation for the Iranian people,” Marandi said. “And this is not new: when we see what the United States and the Saudis did to Yemen, that’s basically been their objective from day one. During the Yemeni war, the American government, they helped the Saudis in starving the people of Yemen. They tried to starve Yemen in order to force them to surrender. And they created a naval blockade preventing food from coming in.”

“And not just the United States - the Europeans, the Canadians, they all provided the Saudis with the necessary weapons and the advisers and the trainers to be able to carry out this objective and to force starvation upon the people of that country,” he continued.

“And it failed in Yemen. The poorest country in the world, devastated, has effectively defeated the Saudis, and the Saudis are moving towards greater crisis because of the collapse in the oil prices, the coronavirus and their failure in Yemen,” Marandi told Sputnik.

“So in the case of Iran, obviously the United States will fail. They will succeed in killing people. The price of certain medicines has gone up. Cancer patients especially are very vulnerable; the price of their medicine has gone up dramatically. And some medicines are not available, there are shortages of certain medicines, so the US government can gloat that they succeeded in killing people. They can celebrate that. It will make the costs of living more expensive; food will be more inaccessible to poor people. I’m sure that’s something that will satisfy senators from both the Republican and the Democratic Party. I’m sure they take pleasure in that.”

“But it will not force Iran to give up its sovereignty and its rights. Just as the Iranians prevented ISIS [Daesh] and al-Qaeda from taking over Syria and Iraq,” Marandi said. “The same ISIS and al-Qaeda where the Americans, the Saudis and unfortunately the Turkish government among

others, the Israelis, worked together to ... undermine Syria. They failed there; Syria paid a heavy price, but they failed. In the case of Iran, I have no doubt that they will fail.”

“The sad thing is that the American people are more or less ignorant about this reality, because the corporate media - the mainstream media, as they call it - they have no interest in the people of Iran and in starvation,” Marandi told Sputnik, noting that “they basically toe the line when it comes to foreign policy, and there’s no real difference between Democrats and Republicans when it comes to Yemen, Iran, Syria, Venezuela and the misery that they’ve created in Libya or Afghanistan or Iraq or elsewhere, like Cuba.”

Marandi noted that the conditions [given by US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in November 2018](#) for the lowering of sanctions “meant that Iran has to give up its sovereignty. It will no longer be a nation-state.”

“Then he said if Iran does not accept those conditions, which no country in the world will ever do, then the people of Iran will effectively have to starve. That’s what he was saying, and that’s what US policy has been ever since,” he added.

Marandi noted that earlier on Friday, he spoke with an Iranian doctor who is working on an Iranian COVID-19 vaccine. “He told me that the United States is actively preventing Iran from making progress. Whatever material Iran needs, they block those materials from being purchased by Iran. So the American government does not want Iran to have a vaccine for this, and the American government, when the virus hit the country, they increased sanctions, and now they’re increasing sanctions further, to prevent Iran from fighting the coronavirus.”

However, Marandi also noted that despite US attempts to encircle and isolate Iran in the region politically, Washington’s readiness to use economic sanctions as a weapon against all adversaries is “facilitating a convergence of interests among these countries.”

“Iran’s relationship with its neighbors like Iraq or Afghanistan are quite good, and the reason is because these governments want to have good relations despite the United States,” he noted.

“In the case of China or Russia, I think it’s mostly the doing of the United States, the very good relationship that’s being built ... Since these countries are being threatened by the likes of Pompeo or formerly [White House national security adviser John] Bolton and Trump and others and the neocons, then obviously they’re going to be looking for countries to work more closely with in order to prevent the United States government from doing anything foolish.”

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Graphic Videos: Missouri Locals Demand Police Reform After Cop’s Violent Arrest of Pregnant Woman

by [Evan Craighead](#)

Activists in Kansas City, Missouri, are calling for the firing of the local police chief and a 50% budget cut to the department following the recent viral and brutal arrest of an expecting mother. Deja Stallings, who is nine months pregnant, broke her silence during a news conference Thursday, a week after she was arrested and manhandled by officers with the Kansas City Police Department (KCPD).

"KCPD wants you to believe that they are the victim, but they are not," the 25-year-old told the crowd. "I am a traumatized pregnant woman. I am not a threat. Now I can barely walk. I cry every day because I am scared for my baby."

Activists and civil rights group members also spoke at the October 8 news conference, calling attention to the actions of the KCPD, which were caught on camera by various bystanders. In one widely-circulated clip, arresting officers are overheard threatening to arrest bystanders unless they back up from the pregnant woman.

Additional footage captured from the September 30 scene shows an officer forcing Stallings onto her stomach before shoving his knee into her lower back and handcuffing the expecting mother.

The officer then fails to lift Stallings onto her feet, only managing to turn her over.

"My baby girl has not even been born, but she is a victim of police brutality. I am trying to stay strong," Stallings concluded on Thursday.

Doctors believe the unborn child remains healthy.

The KCPD cop in question has not been reprimanded or suspended from the force.

Furthermore, authorities have maintained that Stallings, booked on a charge of hindering police duties, interfered with officers' arrest of an unnamed man.

"So we are not naming that officer," said KCPD spokesperson Sgt. Jacob Becchina on Thursday, [as reported by Fox 4](#). "The officer is currently on duty. On full duty. There is no restrictions or anything like that."

Becchina said that an internal probe has been launched into the incident by Jackson County Prosecutor Jean Peters Baker's office to determine whether the officers on the scene violated policy or did not follow procedure.

It's worth noting that without eyewitness footage, the investigation would be left with only surveillance video and dashboard camera footage from police cruisers. KCPD officers will not be equipped with body cameras until the end of 2020, [the department projects](#).

Since Stallings' arrest last Wednesday, local activists have assembled and demanded the city fire KCPD Chief Rick Smith and the arresting officer in question. [They have also](#) called for the police department's budget to be cut in half, with the slashed funds redirected to education and mental health services.

Kansas City City Council member Eric Bunch [told the Kansas City Star](#) that the September 30 arrest of Stallings is just one of many reasons why he and his colleagues should "take whatever action within our power to completely re-imagine what public safety means in this city."

Bunch highlighted the KCPD received a \$272 million operating budget from the city for 2020-2021, which amounts to more budgeted funds than Kansas City's health, parks, medical care and other services combined.

While Missouri law requires a city to allocate 20% of its general budget to authorities, the KCPD receives 38% of those city funds.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Lawmaker Accuses Royals Harry, Meghan of 'Continued Interference' in US Election

by [Evan Craighead](#)

A lone US congressman has demanded the British government and royal family take action against Prince Harry Mountbatten-Windsor and Meghan Markle, arguing the Duke and Duchess of Sussex are actively conducting “domestic interference” in the 2020 US presidential election. Rep. Jason Smith (R-MO) revealed Friday that he had issued a letter to Dame Karen Pierce, the British ambassador to the United States at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, to express his concern over Harry and Meghan’s “continued interference” in the 2020 presidential election. The congressman stated he became “concerned” by recent comments the married couple made amid the virtual gala for the “TIME 100: The Most Influential People of 2020” event.

"As we approach this November, it's vital that we reject hate speech, misinformation and online negativity," said Harry on September 22. "It's time to not only reflect but act."

"We're just six weeks out from Election Day, and today is National Voter Registration Day," noted Markle, who is a US citizen and eligible to vote on November 3.

Smith asserts Harry and Meghan engaged in domestic interference via encouraging Americans to vote and instructing them to “reject hate speech, misinformation and online negativity.”

He also highlighted that while the British royal family has historically followed a policy of political neutrality, the leanings of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex are “thinly disguised and widely reported.”

While Harry and Meghan’s exit from the royal family is public knowledge, Smith contended that Queen Elizabeth II has allowed them to retain their titles of duke and duchess, as well as certain “privileges.”

“Therefore, by allowing the Duke and Duchess of Sussex to retain their titles, and these political comments to continue, the British Government is effectively condoning interference in the 2020 United States Presidential Election from officials at the highest level of the British establishment,” he wrote.

The congressman concluded by demanding the British government muzzle Harry and Meghan or strip the two of “all titles, styles, and privileges which they currently retain.”

However, when US President Donald Trump was asked about the couple’s remarks last month, he appeared to take the comments in stride, despite the reporter claiming that Harry and Meghan “essentially encouraged people to vote for [Democratic presidential candidate] Joe Biden.”

“I’m not a fan of hers,” Trump said of Markle during his September 23 news conference from the White House. “I wish a lot of luck to Harry, because he’s going to need it.”

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

US Commission on Presidential Debates Cancels Oct. 15 Match-Up Between Trump, Biden

by [Evan Craighead](#)

The nonprofit organizing body of the US presidential elections has reportedly scrapped the anticipated October 15 match-up between US President Donald Trump and Democratic presidential nominee and former US Vice President Joe Biden.

The Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) ultimately moved to cancel the upcoming presidential debate between Trump and Biden after 45 voiced his refusal to participate.

"On October 8, CPD announced that for the health and safety of all involved, the second presidential debate, scheduled for October 15 in Miami, would be conducted virtually," read the CPD's [Friday news release](#).

"Subsequently, the campaigns of the two candidates who qualified for participation in the debate made a series of statements concerning their respective positions regarding their willingness to participate in a virtual debate on October 15, and each now has announced alternate plans for that date."

"It is now apparent there will be no debate on October 15, and the CPD will turn its attention to preparations for the final presidential debate scheduled for October 22," the release noted.

[CPD had announced](#) Thursday that the second presidential debate would resemble more of a town meeting "in which the candidates would participate from separate remote locations."

The re-election campaign of Trump, who recently tested positive for the COVID-19 novel coronavirus, responded to the CPD's Friday decision to cancel the event and claimed "there is no medical reason to stop the October 15 debate in Miami from proceeding as scheduled, since the President will be healthy and ready to debate."

The US president previously slammed the format change [during an interview](#) with Fox Business' Maria Bartiromo.

"I'm not going to waste my time with a virtual debate. That's not what debating is all about. You sit behind a computer and do a debate, that is ridiculous," he said.

Biden's campaign team acknowledged Trump's decision to back out [by announcing an October 15 town hall](#) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, with ABC's George Stephanopoulos.

The US president was overheard coughing during a Thursday night interview with Fox News' Sean Hannity. Trump [appeared to ignore Hannity](#) when asked whether he received a negative COVID-19 test result after [returning from his four-day stay](#) at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Monday.

He went on to assert to Hannity that Steve Scully, the moderator for the now-canceled debate, is a ["never-Trumper."](#)

Nevertheless, [Trump reportedly intends](#) to host up to 2,000 people for an event on the South Lawn of the White House on Saturday. He also [announced via social media](#) that he will be traveling to Sanford, Florida, on Monday to hold a "very BIG RALLY."

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Videos: Hurricane Delta Makes Landfall in US Gulf as Tens of Thousands Undergo Power Outages

by [Evan Craighead](#)

As some 11 million US residents in Hurricane Delta's projected path wait out the storm's landfall, the Category 2 storm's strong winds and storm surges are expected to bring about "life-threatening" conditions - some of which began prior to the cyclone's arrival to the US Gulf. The [latest update](#) issued by the US National Hurricane Center on Friday indicated that the powerful cyclone was moving at a pace of 14 mph and bringing with it 100-mph maximum sustained winds.

Texas and Louisiana began feeling the wind and water impact of Hurricane Delta earlier Friday, several hours before the storm's arrival to land.

Nearly 10,000 Louisiana residents have taken refuge in shelters across the state, CBS News reported. Hurricane Delta's impact comes just weeks after thousands of Louisianans and Texans were displaced by Hurricane Laura in late August.

"To the people of Southwest Louisiana, I know you are strong. I also know you're about to be tested again," said Democratic Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards [late Thursday night](#). [PowerOutage.us data](#) shows that as of this article's publication, more than 50,000 Texans and 64,000 Louisianans have already lost power.

Storm surge warnings have gone into effect from High Island, Texas, to Pearl River, Louisiana, [according to The Weather Channel](#). A "life-threatening storm surge" is possible under this advisory, particularly in low-level areas that are quick to flood.

Meteorologists project that after Delta's landfall, the storm will continue to move inland over the lower Mississippi Valley throughout the weekend.

The Weather Channel noted that scientists anticipate the highest storm surge in the immediate Gulf Coast area, as well as parts of south-central Louisiana. "Inundation could reach 7 to 11 feet above ground in these areas," the station warned.

The storm's winds are expected to weaken as it tears through the US, decreasing to speeds of around 25 mph by early Monday morning.

This material is distributed by Ghebi LLC on behalf of Federal State Unitary Enterprise Rossiya Segodnya International Information Agency, and additional information is on file with the Department of Justice, Washington, District of Columbia.

Increased Police Killings Linked to Departments Acquiring Pentagon Equipment - Report by [Evan Craighead](#)

US police departments taking advantage of the ability to acquire Washington's surplus military equipment could very well be contributing to unrest and violence in the same communities they are sworn to protect, according to a new analysis.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution [revealed on Thursday](#) that data from the US military and police departments nationwide presented a disturbing relationship between police killings and the [US Department of Defense's 1033 program](#) - an initiative that allows everyday law enforcement to acquire surplus equipment designed for war.

"The results paint a troubling picture: The more equipment a department receives, the more people are shot and killed, even after accounting for violent crime, race, income, drug use and population," wrote AJC's Chris Joyner and Nick Thieme.

For example, AJC found that in the US state of Georgia, a mere 7% of law enforcement agencies received the free 1033 gear over a 10-year period. At the same time, 17% of the 261 individuals shot and killed by authorities in that time were traced back to those 1033-equipped departments.

"The statistical correlation doesn't prove that 1033 gear in a police department causes more fatal police shootings, or that those shootings were unjustified, only that there is a strong relationship between the two," Joyner and Thieme detailed. "The analysis also doesn't suggest that every department in the 1033 program displays a strong relationship between the number of people killed and the amount of 1033 funding accepted."

"The cost that we are dealing with now is a highly militarized police force that is no longer looking like police but [is] looking like they are patrolling a hostile foreign nation," remarked Wayne McElrath, a senior investigative adviser for the Project on Government Oversight in Washington, DC.

McElrath, experienced in both US law enforcement and the US military, argued that government initiatives such as the 1033 program propagate toxic policing practices that are rooted in war-fighting, rather than public safety.

"They are changing the culture," he said. "But we are beginning to accept that it is the norm." Similar research was carried out in 2018 by University of South Carolina professor Edward Lawson and published in the peer-reviewed academic journal Political Research Quarterly. Lawson, who also serves as a data consultant with the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, examined two years' worth of nationwide data and found the same relationship between 1033 equipment and police killings.

The professor told AJC that department culture, leadership and related factors add a psychological element to the equation.

"You're not just police officers, you're soldiers and you're fighting this war on drugs, war on crime, and eventually the war on terror," he expressed. "If all of your leaders are telling you that you're fighting this war, and you're on the front lines of it, that has to have a psychological effect."

"Drawing a direct connection from equipment to killings doesn't make sense, in part because most officers never get to use any of that stuff anyway," Lawson argued. "But if the agency as a whole is more psychologically militarized, that agency will pursue more military equipment and will also kill more civilians."